



U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

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# News Release

## **AIRFORCE TECH SERGEANT INDICTED FOR PRODUCING CHILD PORN**

*Numerous child porn images were discovered on his Nebraska computer*

DENVER — A computer security specialist with U.S. Strategic Command at Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska was indicted by a federal grand jury here Tuesday on one count of producing child pornography, following an investigation by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and other agencies.

U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Erik Dean Rabes, 44, is currently being held in a local Nebraska jail on a \$1 million bond. Acting on leads, the Nebraska State Patrol and Air Force Office of Special Investigations executed a state search warrant in December 2004 at Rabes' residence in La Vista, Neb., for evidence of child pornography violations. They also seized his computer equipment.

Subsequent forensic analysis of his computer resulted in recovering numerous pornographic images.

In April 2005, that information was provided to the Colorado Springs Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force and ultimately to ICE Denver special agents. Additional investigation by ICE agents led to the current federal indictment against Rabes in Colorado since Rabes allegedly produced the child pornography in Colorado.

"We use the child pornographer's tools against him," said Jeffrey Copp, special-agent-in-charge of the ICE Denver Office of Investigations. "Using computer forensic analysis, and partnering with all varieties of law enforcement, ICE is identifying those who abuse children, and presenting them to the U.S. Attorney's Office for prosecution." Copp oversees ICE investigations in: Colorado, Wyoming, Montana and Idaho.

Tuesday's indictment charges Rabes with producing this child pornography in November 2000 when he was stationed at Colorado Springs. According to Air Force authorities, Rabes was then transferred to South Korea for a year, and then transferred again to Offutt Air force Base.

If convicted on the charge in this indictment, Rabes faces a maximum of 20 years in prison, a \$250,000 fine, and three years of supervised release.

This investigation is part of Operation Predator, a nationwide ICE initiative to protect children from sexual predators, including those who travel overseas for sex with minors, Internet child pornographers, criminal alien sex offenders, and child sex traffickers. Since Operation Predator was launched in July 2003, ICE agents have arrested more than 6,230 individuals, including 145 in Colorado, and 98 in Nebraska.

ICE encourages the reporting of suspected child predators and any suspicious activity through its toll-free hotline at 1-866-DHS-2ICE. Investigators staff this hotline around the clock.

Suspected child sexual exploitation or missing children may be reported to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, an Operation Predator partner, at 1-800-843-5678 or <http://www.cybertipline.com>.

# ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.*